



LUCK OF THE DRAW

A Web Enhancement for
Three-Dragon Ante

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Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Three-Dragon Ante™ is the exciting new card game that both you and your characters can play (though playing against your character would take a lot of good role-playing). You can play it with your friends when you need something fun to do between slots at a game convention or while getting food at the local fast-food place, or you can play it as a tournament for prizes. Alternatively, your D&D (or d20 MODERN) characters can play it within the context of a game session. Some guidelines are provided in the game's rulebook for using the **Three-Dragon Ante** in a D&D adventure, but the possibilities are nearly endless.

Luck of the Draw provides additional rules for using the game within the confines of a D&D session, plus new feats that relate to games of chance and a short adventure to demonstrate how to incorporate all these elements into a game session.

As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*—as well as **Three-Dragon Ante**—to utilize the material in this web enhancement. The information presented here utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules.

To get you started, send your campaign's characters on the short adventure called **Master of the Cards** included in the **Three-Dragon Ante** rulebook. This scenario gives you an example of how to incorporate the cards into your game. Then read the following material and try out the short adventure included with this web enhancement.

RULES FOR USING THREE-DRAGON ANTE IN A D&D GAME

The rules for playing **Three-Dragon Ante** from a character point of view are built to let the player play the game in the same manner that he resolves all other random events affecting the character. After all, rolling dice to determine the winner would be dull, and you wouldn't need an actual game to determine a winner at cards that way.

PLAY OPTIONS

The **Three-Dragon Ante** rulebook provides three options for play that allow for different amounts of participation on the part of the player. The following options are reprinted from the **Three-Dragon Ante** rulebook.

NEW FEATS

Your character may or may not be a card shark, but she's quite likely to meet NPC **Three-Dragon Ante** experts in the course of play. Below are some new feats that PCs and NPCs can take to augment their card-playing prowess.

CARD CHEAT

You can cheat at cards so well that others don't even notice.

Prerequisite: Card Shark.

Benefit: This feat provides three benefits. First, when playing **Three-Dragon Ante** (or any other card game that works in a similar way) using Option 1 (no special abilities allowed) or Option 2 (only one special ability allowed), you can use any special abilities for which you qualify. However, you can use each extra special ability granted by this feat only once per game, rather than at will. Second, when an opponent with the Card Shark feat denies you the use of a special ability, you can use it anyway. Third, after all the cards in a gambit have been played, but before the gambit is resolved, you can replace one of the cards you played with a card from your hand.

CARD SHARK

You are such an expert at card games that you can counter the skills of others.

Benefit: When playing **Three-Dragon Ante** (or any other card game that works in a similar way), you can deny any opponent the use of one special ability from the table in the Skill Use section for the remainder of the game. You must select the ability the first time it is used. Thereafter, that player cannot use that ability for the rest of the game. You can use this ability against each opponent in the game, but only once per opponent.

CARDS OVER SWORDS

You can resolve conflicts using **Three-Dragon Ante** instead of combat.

Prerequisite: 1st level character, Diplomacy 4 ranks.

Benefit: When faced with a potential combat against a single foe with an Intelligence score of at least 10, you can propose resolving the conflict via a card game—provided that the foe does not consider you a personal enemy. To do so, make a Diplomacy check as a swift action. If you successfully change the foe's attitude toward you from hostile to indifferent, it agrees to play the proposed game in lieu of combat, even if it has never played the game or even heard of it. No retry is allowed against the same foe for a given conflict. The

Option 1—Player-centric: Use the normal game rules and simply roleplay the character's reactions. None of the character's skills come into play.

Option 2—Mixed: Use the normal game rules, but each character chooses one special ability from the table in the Skill Use section (below) for which she qualifies.

Option 3—Character-centric: Use the normal game rules, and each character can use any special ability from the table in the Skill Use section (below) for which she qualifies.

SKILL USE

Each character who has 5 or more ranks in any of the skills on the following table gains a special ability that can influence the outcome of the game. The number of these abilities that a character can use depends on the play option selected, as defined above. Using the abilities given here keeps the players playing the game, and keeps skill check rolls (and other die rolls) out of the process. Here is the list of skills that apply and what they allow a character to do.

Skill	Ability
Bluff	Whenever the rules instruct you to pay 2 or more gp to another player, pay 1 fewer gp.
Concentration	Whenever you ante, pay 1 fewer gp into the stakes, unless another player's hoard contains less gold than yours.
Diplomacy	If you are the leader, you may choose another player before your turn this round to be the leader instead. The switch applies to this round only.
Intimidate	As long as you and any other player tie for the strongest flight, you can't be chosen as the opponent with the strongest flight.
Profession (Gambler)	After you discard the top card of the deck while buying cards, you may also discard a second card from the top of the deck. If you exercise this option, pay the second card's strength in gold to the stakes instead of the first card's strength.
Sense Motive	If an opponent plays a second card and both are the same color dragon, you may look at his hand before any power triggers. You may also use this ability if a player plays Tiamat and any black, blue, green, red, or white dragon.
Sleight of Hand	After you use a card's power or a strength flight to steal gold from the stakes, you may steal 1 more gp from the stakes—provided that the stakes still contain 2 or more gp.
Wild Card	If you're a dragon or half-dragon, you can select this ability, which does not correlate with a skill. Once in every game, you may count any mortal that you have played this turn as the third dragon of any color to complete a color flight.

winner of the card game wins the dispute; the loser gives up all equipment and wealth on her person and withdraws.

You must allow the foe to go free and unharmed at the end of the game. Any attempt to attack it reopens the dispute and precipitates combat. However, you can question the foe as if you defeated it in combat, and you can advise the authorities as to its whereabouts after it has left. In a sense, the foe has earned a head start on the authorities for playing the game with you.

MAGIC OF THE CARDS

You can use your magic to manipulate the outcome of the game.

Prerequisite: Able to cast the spell corresponding to the desired effect on the table below.

Benefit: Certain spells can affect the outcome of a **Three-Dragon Ante** game. With this feat, you can use the effects of those spells in specific ways without actually casting them.

During the game, you can use any of the following abilities, provided that you can cast the associated spell. You must pay the indicated cost in gold to the stakes for each ability that you invoke, each time you invoke it. Each effect lasts for one gambit, and you must initiate it on your turn. You can use only one effect per turn.

Spell	GP Cost	Game Effect
Animate dead	4	Play a card from the discard pile instead of from your hand. You can use this ability only to play a card into your flight.
Bless	1	Every card you play counts toward strongest flight as if it had +1 Str more than it actually has. The cards don't count as +1 Str for any other purpose.
Bull's strength	2	You can add +2 to the strength of any one card in your flight, or to the card you ante. You can affect only one card per gambit with this ability.
Charm monster	4	You can take over a card played by someone else. To do so, trade any one card already in your flight with the desired card from the opponent's flight.
Death knell	2	After a gambit is over, you can place any card that you or an opponent has played into your hand instead of discarding it.
Minor image	1	You can declare any dragon you play to be the same color as any dragon you have already played for the purpose of completing a color flight. You can affect only one card per flight with this ability.

Obscuring mist	1	You can conceal the exact nature of any one card you have played.
Polymorph	4	You can declare any single card to be any other single card, whether the other card is already in play or not. Thus, you can change a silver dragon into the Princess, even if someone else has already played the Princess.
Ray of enfeeblement	1	You can subtract 4 from the strength of any card in play, be it yours or an opponent's.
Rope trick	2	After a gambit is over, you can put one of your played cards back into your hand instead of discarding it, provided that you have fewer than the maximum number of allowed cards in your hand.
Sleep	1	You can render one card of Str 4 or below that has already been played unusable for the rest of the gambit. It remains in play but does not count.

A QUIET NIGHT OF CARDS

This short adventure is designed for 3rd-4th level characters. You can use it to introduce the game of **Three-Dragon Ante** to your players, or as an interlude between adventures for a group that already knows how to play the game. The scenario can be modified for lower- or higher-level groups simply by adjusting the statistics blocks for the opponents.

A Quiet Night of Cards is nominally set in Greyhawk, but you should be able to place it anywhere in your campaign world without too much difficulty. To run this adventure, you'll need a map of a sizable house that a wealthy merchant might live in alone. If you don't have one, you can use the Haunted House map from the Map-a-Week feature at <http://www.wizards.com/dnd/images/mapofweek/HauntedHouse.jpg> as the basic shell and adjust the contents appropriately.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the Free City of Greyhawk, everyone has enemies. Those enemies are in goodly supply for certain people, including powerful wizards who have bucked the establishment, thieves who have stolen the wrong valuables, and wealthy merchants who have made their fortunes by exploiting others.

One such merchant, Sirius Regulan, has reason to believe that rivals are planning to assassinate him this very evening. Word has reached him through friendly contacts that he should be on his guard this night, and

that a trip to the country would be beneficial to his health. But Sirius does not run from trouble, so he has decided to enlist the aid of some adventurers instead. Preferring not to hire them, he plans instead to invite them over to his home for a “quiet evening of cards,” so that they will be there when the assassins attack.

A. OPENING GAMBIT

The adventure opens in a tavern frequented by adventurers. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter.

The Black Dragon Inn is loud but not rowdy tonight. A number of people are engaged in dice and card games in the back part of the common room, while others consume meals and ale in the front. A barmaid practically throws down drinks in front of one set of customers on her way to another table. It seems that everyone has come here tonight.

While the PCs are ordering their meal, an older man walks into the tavern, looks around, then heads toward the back where the card players are. His arrival does not draw undue attention, since he seems to be one of many who have come to play cards.

NPC: The man is actually Sirius Regulan, who has come here in search of some adventurers he can dupe into visiting him at his home tonight.

Sirius Regulan: hp 60; see Appendix for statistics.

Tactics: Sirius joins a game of **Three-Dragon Ante** and chats with the other players while looking around the room. When his game concludes, he makes eye contact with at least one PC and smiles broadly, as though in invitation. He is trying not to attract undue attention, and if the PCs cannot pick up on his subtle clue, he tries some other means of subtly enticing them over. He does not join them or make any obvious overtures.

If the PCs go over to him, he says he needs more players and asks them if they know how to play **Three-Dragon Ante**. If not, he explains the game and repeats his invitation. Up to five PCs can join his game. He is not interested in whether they play well or poorly; he simply adjusts his play style to suit their skill level. During the game, he asks them how long they have been in the city and whether they like it, and invites them to tell tales of their adventures in hopes of determining their abilities. In return, Sirius chats about the political climate, the trade situation, and his own ventures. He also relates rumors of monsters and treasure in the Cairn Hills and makes conversation about whatever other topics arise.

Development: When he feels that the PCs are at ease with him, Sirius says they should wrap up the game because bards will soon begin to perform, and the tavern will be even noisier. Then, as if struck by an idea, he invites the PCs to continue the game at his house. “A quiet game with my new friends, and some refreshment—now that would be just the thing,” he says. If the PCs are reticent, he uses the information he has gained about them to advantage, offering some enticement calculated to get one or more of them to accept. For example, if he knows that one of the PCs has a taste for fine wine, he offers elven wine or a rare liqueur. He could even offer to show them maps marked with supposed rich caches of treasure. He does not press for acceptance, since making an issue of the invitation would be too obvious, but he does try very hard to entice the party over to his house. If the characters accept his invitation, go to encounter B.

B. SIRIUS REGULAN’S HOUSE

Sirius Regulan lives in a two-story house in the city’s merchant quarter. The grounds around his dwelling are modest—sufficient for an occasional pleasant walk, but not so large that a great many gardeners are needed to maintain them.

The house, which was built about three hundred years ago, has an old style and feel. The walls are paneled in oak, and the furniture is all hand-carved. Portraits, many of them bearing uncanny likenesses to Sirius, hang in several rooms. (Sirius remembers the past through these pictures, all of which depict relatives of his that have died.)

The first story consists of the kitchen and dining room, two sitting rooms, and a storage room off the kitchen. The second story is occupied by bedrooms and a library office in the center of the house. Sirius has the largest bedroom, which features an attached bathing room. All the guest rooms are currently unoccupied. The servants sleep in the attic, and the cellars are used for storage of food and household supplies.

NPCs: Sirius has three servants and a gardener. The household servants are his butler Fejor (human male expert 6, hp 27, Cha 11), his cook Morsan (human male expert 9, hp 38, Craft [cooking] +14), and a valet named Kinkal (human male expert 4, hp 18). While the PCs are there, they encounter only Fejor unless they end up in the kitchens or the master’s bedroom when the action starts.

Development: Sirius takes the PCs inside via the front entrance. Fejor, his butler, greets him at the door, and Sirius introduces his guests. The butler does not

look surprised to see them. He would not look surprised even if he was, but in fact Sirius has people over spontaneously all the time. And this particular night, Fejor was warned in advance to expect guests looking somewhat like the PCs.

Fejor ushers everyone inside and settles the guests in the front sitting room. Normally, he would offer to take their cloaks and equipment and stow them for the duration of the visit, but he does not do so this time unless asked. Sirius has told him that an attack may occur, and his guests may need their equipment.

Once his guests are settled and comfortable, Sirius orders up refreshments and asks that a card table be set up for their use. He then invites them to continue playing **Three-Dragon Ante** with him. He offers to teach anyone who is interested the subtleties of the game and ensures that the socializing lasts well past midnight. He serves food and beverages in plenty, but not enough alcohol to get the PCs drunk. Meanwhile, he orders his servants to close up the rest of the house as if everyone had gone to bed.

C. KNIVES IN THE NIGHT

About 12:15 AM, seven figures sneak into the gardens and make their way to the house. This group of thieves was hired by a rival merchant who was recently forced out of business by Sirius Regulan.

NPCs: Feldan Whisperwalker is an ambitious member of the local Thieves' Guild who has been quietly gathering support from the lower ranks. His band is loyal to him and trained to act as a group.

Feldan Whisperwalker: hp 25; see Appendix for statistics.

Rogue Operatives (3): hp 16 each; see Appendix for statistics.

Rogue Lackeys (3): hp 7 each; see Appendix for statistics.

Tactics: Feldan and his crew make their way around to the back, then climb up and enter through a second-story window at the back of the house. If you are using the haunted house map, the thieves enter via room 15. From there, they separate into groups of two and three and move through the house in search of Sirius, who normally sleeps in room 16. Each PC may make a Listen check opposed by the thieves' Move Silently checks to detect them.

The fight becomes somewhat freeform from here, since everyone involved can move all around the house. The general plans of the thieves are to find and kill Sirius, eliminate anyone else who saw them, and leave the house. In melee, they use their sneak attack abilities to their advantage. If they make it as far as the front sitting room without detection, they make some small noise from the top of the stairs in hopes of attracting

some victims, then ambush and try to kill as silently as possible those who investigate. The thieves do not run because failure means their deaths as well as the deaths of their families. Feldan's employer is nasty and desperate and wants Sirius dead.

D. AFTERMATH

Sirius does not want any captured thieves turned over to the City Watch. Thus, if possible, he kills anyone that the PCs render unconscious, though he takes care not to be seen doing so. He would prefer that the PCs think the assassins died from their wounds.

If pressed, Sirius admits that he expected an attack and thought that some able company might help. If the PCs ask about payment, Sirius remarks that the thieves seem well equipped and that he has no interest in that equipment. The PCs are welcome to it all and can consider themselves well rewarded for one night's work. Furthermore, he suggests that he may have more opportunities for them in the future. And as a show of good faith, he offers to cover any costs of healing at the local temple of their choice.

APPENDIX: NPC STATISTICS BLOCKS

This section provides full statistics for each of the NPCs in the adventure.

SIRIUS REGULAN (MERCHANT)

CR 11

Male human expert 12

LN Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses Listen +2, Spot +17

Languages Ancient Baklunish, Ancient Suel, Common, Giant, Goblinoid, Orc

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 15

(+2 Dex, +2 armor, +3 deflection)

hp 60 (12 HD)

Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +9/+4 (1d4/19–20) or

Ranged light crossbow +10 (1d8/19–20)

Base Atk +9; Grp +9

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14

Feats Card Cheat, Card Shark, Cards over Swords,

Negotiator, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Toughness

Skills Appraise +15, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +26,

Gather Information +4, Intimidate +15,

Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (local)

+13, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Listen

+2, Profession (gambler) +11, Search +12,

Sense Motive +19, Speak Language (Giant,

Goblinoid, Orc), Spot +17

Possessions bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +3, expensive clothes, Three-Dragon Ante deck

Hook "Perhaps we could have a chat and come to some agreeable compromise."

FELDAN WHISPERWALKER

Male human rogue 5

LE Medium humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +8

Languages Common

CR 5

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 19; uncanny dodge (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +1 shield, +1 deflection)

hp 25 (5 HD)

Resist evasion

Fort +2, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 short sword +7 (1d6+2/19–20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +7 (1d6/×3)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot; sneak attack +3d6

Combat Gear potion of fly, potion of cat's grace, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of cure light wounds

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

SA sneak attack +3d6

SQ trap sense +1, trapfinding

Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +4, Bluff +8, Climb +6, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +8, Gather Information +6, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +13, Search +6, Spot +8

Possessions combat gear plus studded leather +1, masterwork buckler, +1 short sword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, ring of protection +1, masterwork thieves' tools

Hook "You go that way, and I'll sneak around back."

Feldan Whisperwalker is a budding gang leader within the Thieves' Guild. Unfortunately for him, he needed the help of some powerful merchants while he was clawing his way to the top. Now he must repay their help by doing "jobs" for them from time to time. Tonight's assignment—to kill Sirius Regulan and make it look like a robbery—is one such job. Feldan is very ambitious and is always dreaming of what he'll do when he becomes master of all thieves. In the meantime, he plans well, covers most eventualities, and cultivates the loyalty of his followers.

ROGUE OPERATIVE

CR 3

Male and female human rogue 3

LE Medium humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +4 armor, +1 shield)

hp 16 (3 HD)

Resist evasion

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 short sword +6 (1d6+2/19–20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +6 (1d6/×3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot; sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of cure light wounds

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10

SA sneak attack +2d6

SQ trap sense +1, trapfinding

Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +4, Bluff +6, Climb +4, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Intimidate +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Search +5, Spot +6

Possessions combat gear plus studded leather +1, masterwork buckler, +1 short sword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, masterwork thieves' tools

Hook "Let's surround that one and finish him off."

Personally recruited by Feldan, these three form the nucleus of his gang. They hope to rise to positions of leadership over their own cells in the gang, but they are patient enough to wait while their power grows. They are loyal to Feldan and attempt to rescue him at all costs in case of trouble. They are even willing to die if doing so would protect his secrets.

ROGUE LACKEY

CR 1

Male human rogue 1

LE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +2 armor, +1 shield)

hp 7 (1 HD)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk short sword +2 (1d6+1/19-20) or
Ranged shortbow +2 (1d6/x3)
Base Atk +0; **Grp** +1
Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot; sneak attack +1d6
Combat Gear 2 potions of cure light wounds

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
SA sneak attack +1d6
SQ trapfinding
Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot
Skills Appraise +2, Bluff +4, Climb +3, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +2, Hide +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Search +4, Spot +5
Possessions combat gear plus leather armor, masterwork buckler, masterwork short sword, shortbow with 20 arrows, masterwork thieves' tools

Hook "Whatever you say, Boss."

These three are just starting out as criminals, and they hope to survive until they are as powerful as Feldan.

They follow orders very well and try to be as competent and prepared as possible. They have not been captured by the law so far and would love to be able to make that boast for years to come, though they realize that this goal is probably unrealistic.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Wiese entered the gaming hobby through the Boy Scouts and progressed from green recruit to head of the most powerful gaming fan organization in the world. He served as head of the RPGA Network for almost seven years, overseeing the creation of the **LIVING GREYHAWK** and **LIVING FORCE** campaigns, among other achievements. Eventually, he returned to private life in Reno, Nevada, where he spends as much time as possible with his wife, new son Owen, and many pets. He is still involved in writing, organizing conventions, and playing. In his spare time, he models proteins for the Biochemistry Department at the University of Nevada, Reno.